कि आई० डी० पी० एल० की आईडल कैपेसिटी करीबन 49 परसेंट है। 50-51 परसेंट कैपेसिटी यूटिलाइजेशन, एवरेज, टोटल है। वह बढ़ना चाहिये और वह यदि बढ़ता है तो कुछ दवाइयों के मामलें में।

श्री चतुरानन मिश्र : वही तो मैंने पूछा।

श्री वसन्त साठे : वही तो मैं कह रहा हूं। वह प्रयास हमारा चल रहा है। असली झगड़ा कास्ट आफ प्रोडक्शन का है। अपने देश में आई० डी० पी० एल० या दूसरे सेक्टर है। जब इनपुट की कास्ट बढती है तब कास्ट आफ प्रोडक्शन ज्यादा होता है कम्पेयर्ड टु द इम्पोर्टेड मेडिसिन्स और बल्क के लिये वहां दिक्कत पैदा होती है प्रोड्यूस करने में। लेकिन मैं आपसे सहमत हूं कि आई० डी० पी० एल० को इसमें कैपेसिटी बढ़ानी चाहिये।

श्री चतुरानन मिश्र : क्षमता से कम काम करने से कास्ट आफ प्रोडक्शन ज्यादा होगा ही, इसलिए अगर क्षमता के अनुसार काम किया जाए तो कास्ट आफ् प्रोडक्शन घट जायेगा। इसलिए उसके लिए आप क्या प्रयास कर रहे हैं, जो कि पहले आपने नहीं किया ?

श्री वसन्त साठे : हमने जो प्रयास किया उससे आई० डी० पी० एल० का प्रोडक्शन बढ़ रहा है और उनका लास भी घट रहा है दिन-ब-दिन और हमारा विश्वास है कि आई०डी०पी०एल० का प्रोडक्शन ज्यादा अच्छा बनेगा।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question.

DR. JOSEPH LEON D'SOUZA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: I did not see you, doctor. I searched for you, Dr. D'Souza. How did you escape my notice? Question No. 207.

Complaints regarding over billing by Telephone Department in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras

*207. SHRI SUSHIL CHAND MOHUNTA:

SHRI BISWA GOSWAMI:†

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that complaints of over billing by the Telephone Department in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras have been on the increase;

(b) if so, what is the number of complaints received in these cities for the last one year; and

(c) what steps have been taken by Government to remedy the situation?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI VIJAYA N. PATIL): (a) While the percentage of excess billing complaints to the number of bills issued continues to be less than 1 per cent, there has been an increase in the number of excess billing complaints during 1983-84 in Bombay, Madras and Calcutta.

(b) The number of complaints received in Bombay, Madras and Calcutta during 1983-84 is as under:

Bombay	..	11,235
Madras	..	4464
Calcutta	..	8,530

(c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House. (*See below*)

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Biswa Goswami.

Statement

The complaints of excess billing received from the subscribers fall under two categories:—

(i) Over billing arising out of clerical errors.

(ii) Over billing arising out of technical and other faults.

The steps taken by the Government to remedy the situation are as follows:

(i) As regards over billing arising out of clerical or punching errors in transcription of meter readings or computation etc., suitable instructions have been issued to all the Units to exercise greater vigilance in this work. In Metropolitan Districts, the work of telephone billing has been computerised to eliminate arithmetical inaccuracies.

(ii) Several steps have also been taken to reduce the incidence of wrong excess billing due to technical faults, such as—

(a) Introduction of positive battery metering in cross-bar exchanges.

(b) Provision of automatic switch over of day and night tariffs.

(c) Reduction of forced release period on called subscriber held conditions from 1 to 2 minutes to 10 to 20 seconds in case of subscribers dialled trunk calls.

(d) Introduction of 500 milli second delay in trunk automatic exchanges for recognition of called subscriber answer condition.

(e) Routine testing of subscribers' meters.

Following steps have also been taken to prevent malpractices that may lead to excess metering complaints such as—

(1) sealing of meters.

(2) locking of Meter Rooms.

(3) Restriction of entry into MDG Rooms (Main Distribution Frame Room).

(4) Raising of Distribution points.

(5) Locking of Distribution points.

Further steps as indicated below are at different stages of trial and are proposed to be implemented after successful completion of trial and observation.

(a) Single Line and Multi Line Observation Equipments are being procured. These will help in recording when and to what numbers and for what duration STD calls are made and how many charge units are recorded on the meter. This detailed information will help in resolving the excess call complaints.

(b) Provision of Automatic Message Accounting Equipment in the telephone exchanges. While the Single Line and Multi Line observation equipment is only for a few subscribers to be observed for some time, the Automatic Message Accounting Equipment would record the details of STD calls.

(c) Permitting use of Charge Indicators for PABXs at the subscriber's premises to help PABX owners ascertain calls made from individual extensions.

(d) Provision of Special Number in the exchanges to which complaints regarding held up cases of STD calls can be made.

Also, the Indian Telegraph Act is being amended to make diversion of lines a cognisable offence.

SHRI BISWA GOSWAMI: Sir, the hon. Minister has agreed that there have been cases of excess billing of telephones in Bombay to the extent of 11,235, in Madras to the extent of 4,464 and in Calcutta to the extent of 3,530 and these complaints have been received so far.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: In Calcutta it is not eight thousand but it is eighty thousand.

SHRI BISWA GOSWAMI: Sir, the reasons that the hon. Minister has mentioned in the statement are that over-billing arises out of clerical errors and out of technical and other faults. Sir, I want to know from the hon. Minister whether corrupt practice is also one of the factors of over-billing, because in the case of technical and clerical errors the Government have taken certain measures to combat them, as mentioned by the Minister in the statement. So, I would like to know what the Government is going to do regarding eliminating the corrupt practices in the matter of over-billing of telephones.

SHRI V. N. GADGIL: Sir, there are four factors which are responsible for over-billing or excess billing, namely, (1) clerical errors, (2) technical defects, (3) as he mentioned, some bad elements indulge in diversion of lines, and (4) last but not the least, some of the subscribers forget that when they make an STD call, the charges sometimes are 12 times or 16 times of ordinary calls, and they go on talking without realising that the bill would increase. As far as diversion is concerned, corruption is concerned, only last week this hon. House passed a Bill under which we proposed to make the diversion of lines a penal offence, a cognisable offence and punishment has been provided for it.

SHRI BISWA GOSWAMI: Sir, I want to know from the hon. Minister that now that a punishment has been provided for such offences, how many such persons have been so far punished. I want to know also what effect it had after the introduction of these measures. Has there been any improvement in the situation? I also want to know from the Minister whether it is not a fact that complaints from the subscribers regarding over-billing are not attended to; they are simply asked to deposit the money and rest contented. So I want the Minister to tell us whether it is not a fact that complaints are not attended to.

SHRI V. N. GADGIL: It is not correct. In Delhi alone, in 1982-83 we returned one crore of rupees as rebate when we found that the billing was not correct. In such cases, we do give relief. So it is not correct to say that complaints are not attended to.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

बीड़ी मजदूरों का शोषण

*201. **श्री राम नरेश कुशवाहा :** क्या **श्रम और पुनर्वास** मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार का ध्यान 19 जुलाई, 1984 के "जनसत्ता" में "बीड़ी मजदूरों का घोर शोषण" शीर्षक के अंतर्गत प्रकाशित समाचार की ओर दिलाया गया है ;

(ख) यदि हां, तो उसका ब्यौरा क्या है ; और

(ग) सरकार इस संबंध में क्या कार्यवाही करने का विचार रखती है ?

श्रम और पुनर्वास मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री धर्मवीर) : (क) जी, हां।

(ख) समाचार में उल्लिखित अधिक महत्वपूर्ण ब्यौरे निम्नलिखित हैं :-

(1) मोहम्दाबाद, जामनिया, सैयदपुर और गाजीपुर में लगभग 12 बीड़ी प्रतिष्ठान हैं जिनमें लगभग 70,000 श्रमिक नियोजित हैं। काफी संख्या में महिलाएं और बालक भी नियोजित किए जाते हैं जो अपने घरों में काम करते हैं। आरोप लगाया गया है कि नियोजिकों द्वारा